

The Single Fold

2026 30th Anniversary Special Edition
Newsletter of the East Anglia Region

the Society
of Bookbinders 

This special issue of The Single Fold has been produced to celebrate thirty years since the creation of the East Anglia Region of the Society of Bookbinders. It starts with a piece by Linda Missing about the formation of the region, followed by pictures and descriptions of the books made by members to commemorate this auspicious event.

SoB East Anglia Thriving at 30

1995: SoB East Anglia Region set up.

Then 1998: On-line booksellers Amazon launched in the UK, with 1.2 million book titles in its fulfilment centre in Milton Keynes, signalling the end of bookshops on our high streets?

Then 2007: Kindle e-reader introduced, signalling the end of the printed book?

Despite on-line and digital technologies having impacted on just about every aspect of our lives over the past 30 years, the physical book is still very much with us. And bookshops. And people wanting to bind books by hand. Whether to repair or conserve old books, or create new books, or use the book structure in new ways. Indeed, it was thanks to the wonders of technology that I'm writing this short celebration of SoB East Anglia! During Barry Clark's Webinar talk back in March 2025, on the history of the SoB since its creation in 1974, I heard that we are 30 this year!! A quick email to the Committee confirmed that, they too, thought the anniversary should be marked. We then contacted members and they put forward the idea to make our annual Social in January 2026 the focus, and include a challenge for members to create something on the theme of 30, and bring it along.

So, how did it all begin? Here are a few things I've found out from Jenny Codrington, Pamela Birch, George Davidson and Bridget Dickinson. Until 1995, most of the SoB members in the counties now making up our Region were members of London & South, and probably many other bookbinders in East Anglia weren't SoB members because London, where the meetings took place, was so far away. It was Maureen Duke no less, along with John Mitchell, who suggested to Bedford resident member Jenny Codrington that she might like to set up a new Region. Jenny at the time was attending one of Maureen's bookbinding courses in London. After a meeting at the home of James Cassels, with the support of the National Council and a grant to start things off, SoB East Anglia was born, with Jenny Codrington the first Chair.

Existing members who wanted to join were transferred, and new members joined. Quite soon Pamela Birch joined and found herself the Secretary! And, as with all these things, George Davidson became Treasurer, after only agreeing to join the Society if he didn't have to do anything!!

There were probably 30 members initially, rising to about 40 in the coming years. A newsletter was begun, and Mel Jefferson cleverly named it The Single Fold, so it was cost effective to produce and easy to fill. Great thinking!!

Cambridge was identified as the centre of the Region, and has remained so for meetings and workshops since then, moving to the upstairs committee room in Linton Village Hall when central Cambridge got too expensive. Until the main hall became available, activities were limited to talks and demonstrations.

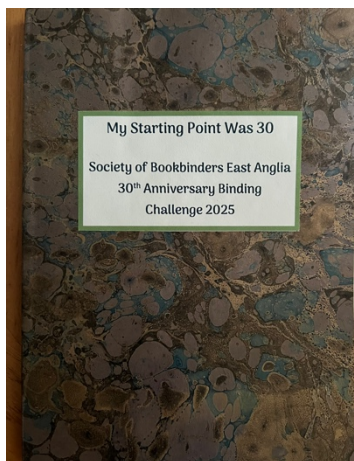
So, here we are in 2026. Still thriving, with over 80 members. We weathered the storm of the Covid lock-downs and the slow period of recovery until people felt confident enough to attend gatherings again. There is always a great buzz at the Linton workshops. Yes, there are now YouTube tutorials, but there's nothing like getting together with others and sharing the learning experience. Great friendships are made and help given when you are in the same room.

The SoB is so needed now. Gone are most of the college bookbinding courses, the apprenticeships, the in-house binding and conservation teams at libraries and collections. Our outreach programme has proved popular, raising awareness of the craft of hand bookbinding, as well as attracting new members wanting to learn the skills. Here's to another 30 years!

Linda Missing

The anniversary books

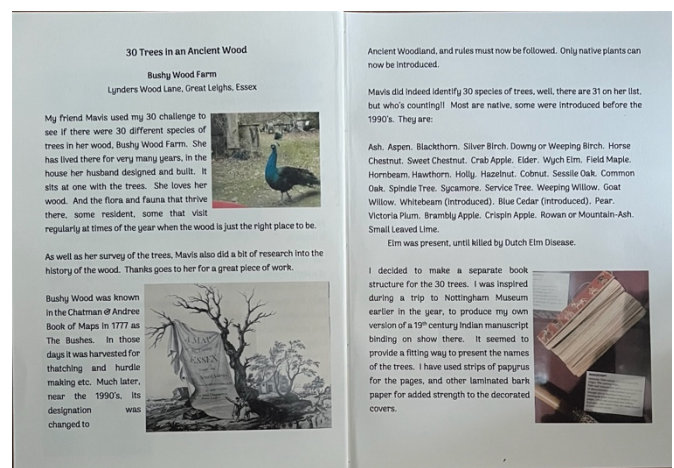
1) Linda Missing



I think this was the first time in all the years that I've been a member of SoB, that I actually brought along, or indeed finished, one of the challenges!! I'd always intended to, and always had great plans and ideas, but never got to the stage of being happy for others to see them. This time it was different. I felt I had to, as I was the one that first suggested we mark our 30th anniversary. I felt responsible!!

Once the ideas that came in from members settled on a binding challenge, my initial planning featured lots of

scribbles to represent the number 30 in lots of different structures. I thought I'd use the project to challenge myself to do all the bookbinding things I'd always wanted to do, or perfect. Inlays and onlays. Boxes and enclosures. Pop-ups and pull-outs. As usual, I left it all





too late! So, after a big push in the final week before the big reveal at Linton, I produced a two-section booklet with paper cover and a simple pop-up horse!

The booklet was full of facts involving 30 that my friends and family had given me.

I also produced a separate binding structure based on a 19th century Indian manuscript I saw in Nottingham Museum. It records the 30

different species of tree that my friend identified in her ancient wood. I used papyrus for the strips and bark paper for the covers. The coloured decoration was from a painting on fibre paper of Tutankhamun, presumably a tourist souvenir, found rolled up in a charity shop. The strips were thread onto garden twine. Recycled wooden buttons and beads keep everything together when not in use.



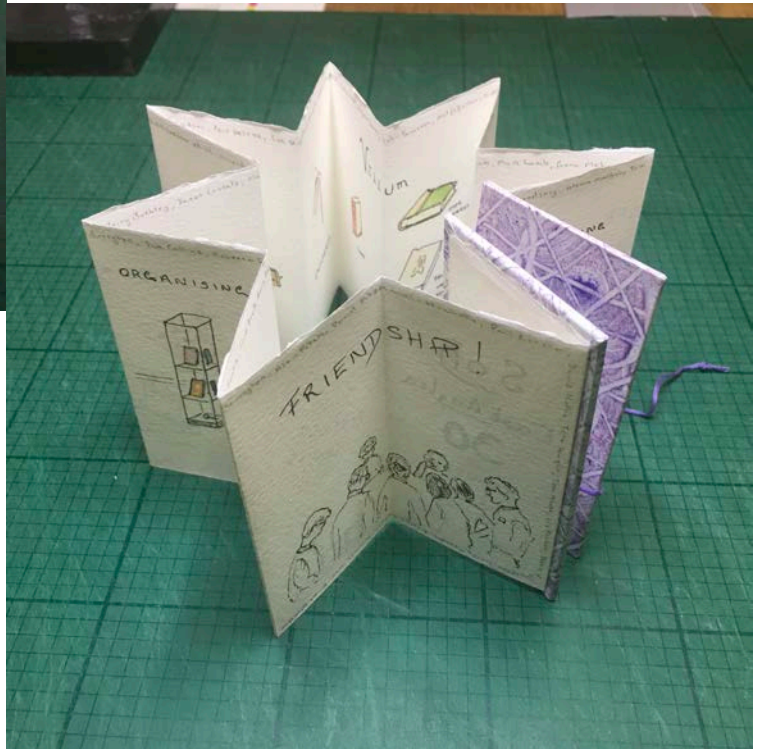
2) Pamela Birch



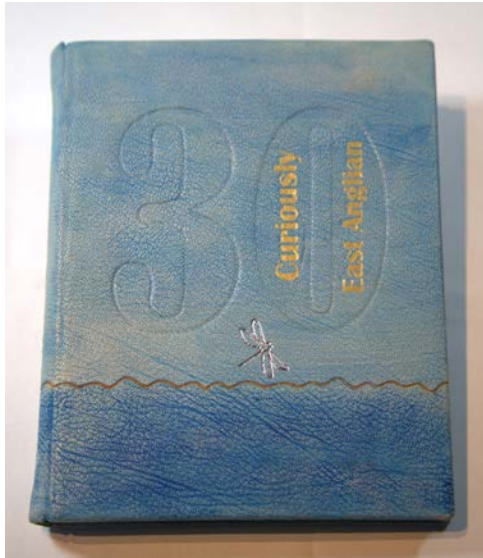
My little concertina book for the 30th anniversary showed things that I had learnt about with the East Anglian Region of SOB over the last 30 years and the names of tutors who had demonstrated the techniques and some of the members who had learnt alongside me. Anyone seeing the title page might have assumed that it showed 30 things I'd learnt, but, although I started out with this in mind, by the time it was finished that aspect didn't really stand up to scrutiny as, depending how you counted the things there were either more or less than 30. Typical me, even when I think I have a plan I find it hard to stick to it, but I had fun doing it.

(Covers of paste paper - I'd recently been making some with

people at work for a retirement present for our conservator and had some paste left over. Ink and watercolour drawings of various bookbinding things on both sides of one of several long, thin off-cuts of paper that I acquired at an East Anglian region workshop about 18 years ago and which I have been using for little books ever since.)



3) Joanna Sergeant



The book was compiled by me in celebration of the 30th anniversary of the East Anglian branch of the Society of Bookbinders. It is a collection of 30 curiously East Anglian things split into 3 broad categories being “Nature”, “Folklore & traditions” and “Crafts & skills”. It is sewn onto stubs which are decorated with the same marbling as the endpapers in order to facilitate the creation of the “Stick-of-rock” illusion of the wrapped card “30” through the spine. The page edges of the actual text are decorated with sprinkled acrylic inks in keeping with the marbled paper and the textblock is completed by made endpapers with leather joints. The marbling was chosen to reflect the colours of the East Anglian

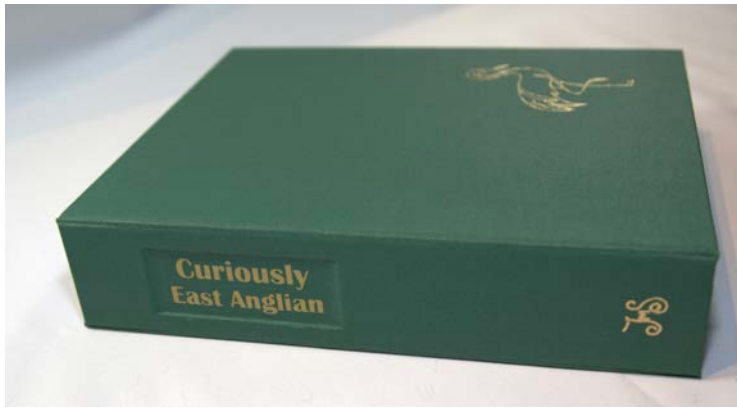
coastline of

which there is so much. The endpapers page edges are decorated with gold, again acrylic. The book is bound in natural “Oasis” goat skin from Russells Fine Leathers which has been coloured with acrylic paints which were applied and then rubbed off to make the beautiful grain of the leather really stand out. The waving line of the division between sea and the huge sky that East Anglia is known for was marked by hand with a heat pen into the raw leather before the colouring was done. While the leather was still damp the number 30 was pressed hard into the boards on both front and back. The gold



the spine. It is covered in green and blue bookcloths to tie in with the colours of the marbled papers that were also used to line the box. The golden crane on the front of the box and my initials on the

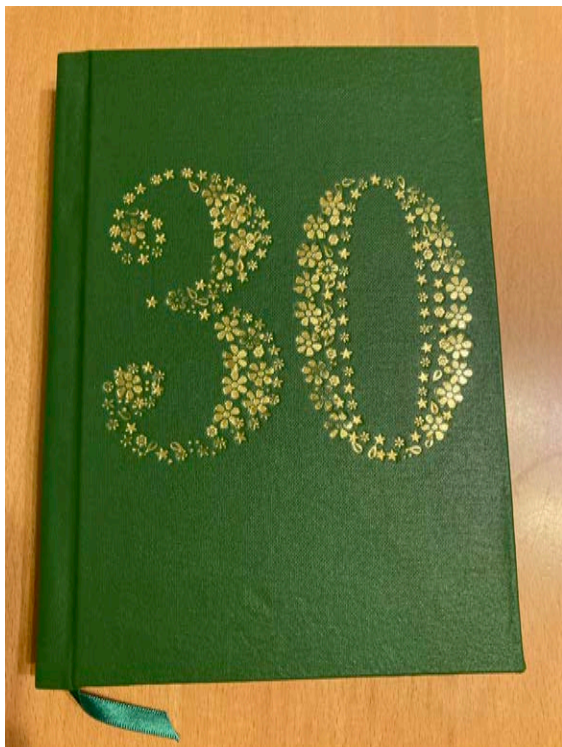
lettering (Heat transfer vinyl - HTV) was created on a cutting machine (Silhouette Cameo 4) before being ironed on and the silver dragonfly and my initials were applied by hand using silver foil and a heat pen. The box is a pop-up design inspired by Hugo Peller though it varies as the box is a clamshell design rather than the two halves which usually meet flush. I wanted the book to be properly protected in the box, whilst also creating the pop-up “reveal” of the “Stick-of-rock” “30” in



spine were drawn by hand using gold foils and a heat pen and once again the gold lettering was HTV ironed into the recessed window on the box spine.

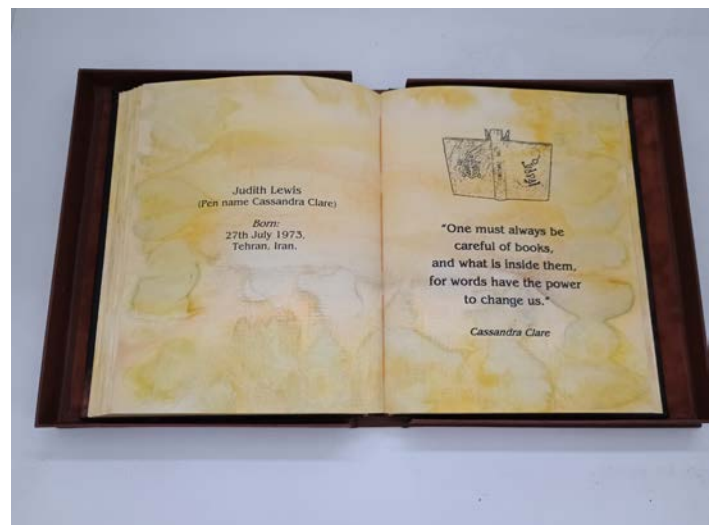
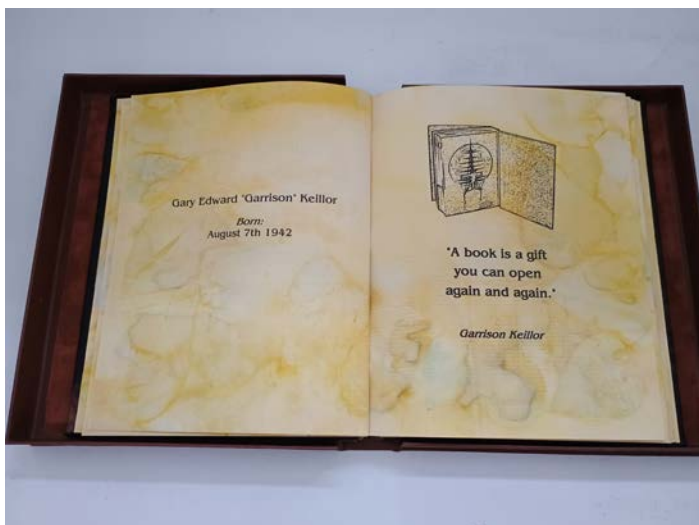
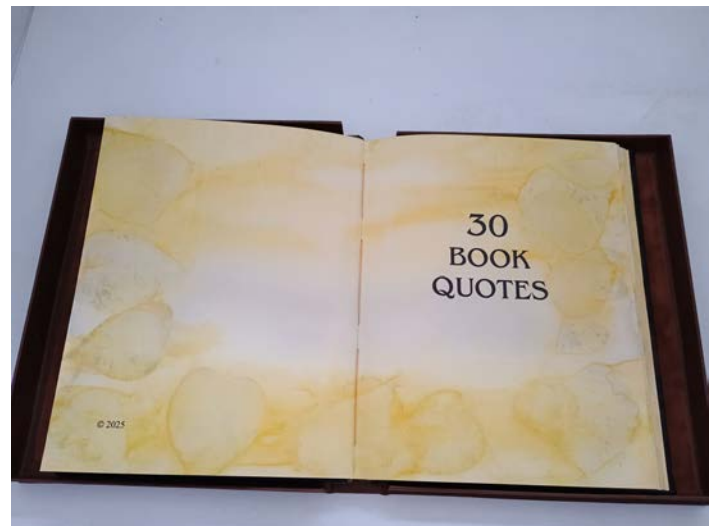
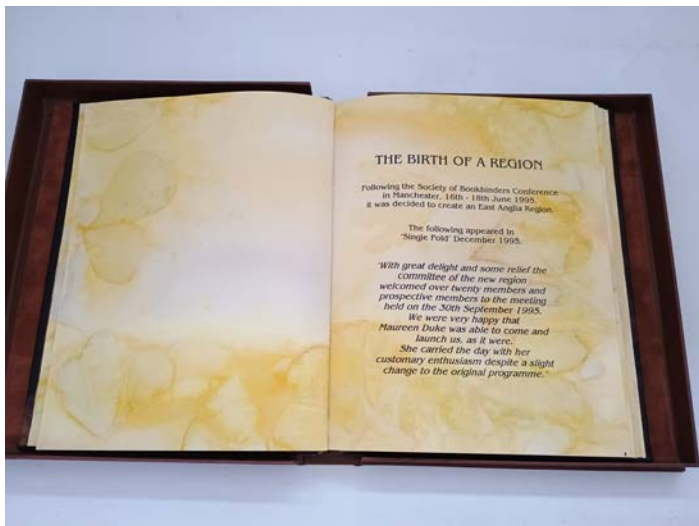


4) Carol Lampard



I made this book for the 30th Anniversary. I chose Green as it is a traditional colour for 30 year anniversaries. There are 30 pages made from 5 sections of 6 folded sheets. Each section is a different shade of green. The endpapers are green and gold marbled paper from Jemma Lewis. The Green library canvas case was tooled in gold foil. The design was inspired by calligraphic patterns taught me by Joy Daniels, a Northampton calligrapher. In calligraphy we use a stencil number or letter which is then filled with pen patterns. I used this idea making a card template and tooling inside using a few hand tools.

5) Alan Fitch





6) Wendy Arnold

A Book of 30

30 equilateral triangles of my hand marbled paper displayed using my interests in geometry (to achieve isometric grid for folds) and calligraphy.

30 x 2 mm side length of triangles

30 x 2° angles within triangles

30 individual strands in the cord

30 different coloured strands

30 bookbinding tools illustrated on the reverse

30 x 300 km the distance travelled by the button from Cambodia to the UK

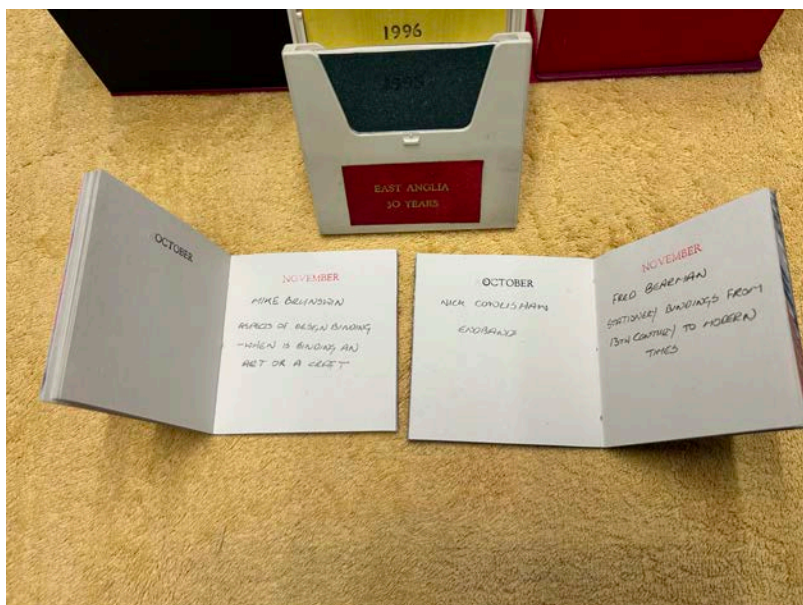
30th Anniversary of SoB East Anglia

Wendy Arnold.



7) Paul Garcia

Inspiration strikes at unexpected moments. I had almost abandoned the idea of making a 30th anniversary book until I was tidying out some cupboards and I came across three boxes of old 3½ inch floppy discs. The discs were of no interest, but the boxes were rather splendid expanding structures that held ten discs each. So I made thirty little books, each the same size as a disc with twelve pages, labelled each with a year, and inside wrote the the workshops that had been held at Linton in each month. I like the overall effect, although I wish I had better handwriting.





Important Note: If your address label says 'Not Renewed', it means that the new membership system thinks you haven't renewed since January 2026, so although you will still get communications from the region, you may not get national messages. If you think that's wrong, then please visit the SoB website to renew your membership.

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